



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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### DEQ offers recycling tips for the holiday season

BATON ROUGE - Louisiana, like the rest of the nation, produces more garbage in December than any other month. However, all this extra garbage doesn't have to go to the curb; you can make the holidays easier and take care of the environment too. DEQ suggests a few simple tips to help.

#### **"Pre-Cycle" your Christmas tree**

You can pre-cycle by taking recycling and reuse into consideration when you buy. An artificial tree doesn't have to be discarded and if you buy a live tree, you can replant it in your yard. If you have a cut tree, remember that tinsel, flocking and decorations must be removed before recycling. Recyclable trees are usually collected the first two weeks in January and are used in coastal restoration projects or ground up into compost or mulch. Call your local sanitation department or waste hauler/recycler to find out what your community does with used Christmas trees. The state Department of Natural Resources' Christmas Tree Program helps coastal communities to place their discarded trees into the marshes for rebuilding eroding shorelines. For a list of participating parishes and to learn more, go to [www.dnr.state.la.us](http://www.dnr.state.la.us).

#### **Gift-wrapping innovations and buying recycled**

Save and reuse gift bags or use Christmas theme fabric with Velcro fasteners instead of paper wrap. Another option would be to use decorative gift boxes for your gifts. Many more products are being made with recycled content. Buy recycled when possible and ask the retailer if you cannot find the product you want with recycled content.

#### **Foam Peanuts are recyclable**

Most local mailbox or postal shipping stores will take your foam peanuts for recycling. To find them call The Peanut Hotline at 800-828-2214. If you are a retailer who would like to participate, go to [www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline](http://www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline).

#### **Much of Christmas can be recycled**

Most cardboard can be recycled and you can use rechargeable batteries for toys, cameras and gadgets. When those batteries no longer hold a charge, call the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at 800-8-battery or go to their web page at [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org) for the nearest battery-recycling drop off.

Have a safe Christmas. Remember to never burn wrapping paper or Christmas trees in the fireplace. For more Christmas recycling ideas go to <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/87/Default.aspx>. If you have recycling ideas to share email us at [deqassistance@la.gov](mailto:deqassistance@la.gov). You can call the DEQ Recycling and Litter Section at 225-219-3265 or toll free at 800-305-6621.